

CONFIDENTIAL
Department of State

EXCISE INCOMING TELEGRAM 40

103

PAGE 01 TEL AV 20525 01 OF 02 142054Z 1801
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SS-15 MED-05 L-03 OCS-06 PPT-01
CA-01 SY-05 HHS-04 ED-04 /056 W

R 121730Z NOV 80
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3246

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 20525

FOR HEA/IAI CA/OCS/EHR, ALSO FOR OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR

E.O. 12065: GDS 11/12/86 (HUGHES, JAMES F) OR-V
TAGS: CASC
SUBJECT: BLACK HEBREWS

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 20207, (B) TEL AVIV 20209,
(C) TEL AVIV 20341

1. (C) ON NOV. 7, TWO CONOFFS, A CONSULAR FSN AND THE WIFE OF THE POLITICAL COUNSELLOR VISITED THE BHC IN DIMONA. THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO ASCERTAIN THE REACTION OF THE BHC LEADERSHIP TO THE LATEST GOI DEVELOPMENTS AS REPORTED IN RECENT NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (SEE REF-TELS). IT WAS ALSO HOPED THAT THE FIRST WOMAN VISITOR FROM THE EMBASSY MIGHT BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH A LINE OF COMMUNICATION WITH BH WOMEN REGARDING CHILD CARE, EDUCATION AND NUTRITION, AND ALSO MAKE FRESH FIRST-HAND OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE HEALTH OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN. WE BELIEVE THAT IN THE FUTURE IT WILL BE USEFUL, IN ADDITION TO OUR REGULAR TEAM, TO TAKE ALONG NEW OBSERVERS ON THESE VISITS TO THE BHC WHENEVER POSSIBLE. THIS PARTICULAR TRIP WAS MADE ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT, WITH ONLY TWO HOURS NOTICE TO BEN-AMI CARTER. EMBASSY VISITORS LEFT AT 10 AM AND RETURNED AT 5 PM.

2. (LOU) UPON ARRIVAL IN DIMONA, EMBASSY VISITORS FOUND THE BHC APARTMENTS ALMOST DESERTED SINCE A LARGE NUMBER HAD ALREADY MOVED TO OTHER APARTMENTS IN A DIMONA "ABSORPTION CENTER" ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR NEW RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS. NEVERTHELESS, THEY WERE USHERED INTO THE VISITORS' ROOM IN THE OLD AREA WHERE A FEW APARTMENTS HAVE BEEN RETAINED BY THE BHC AND WERE KEPT WAITING MORE THAN THE USUAL HALF HOUR FOR BEN-AMI CARTER TO MAKE HIS APPEARANCE.

- HE HAS THE HIGHEST PRAISE FOR THE MAYOR OF DIMONA, JACQUES AMIR, AND THE SECRETARY OF THE WORKERS' FEDERATION, YERUHAM MESHEL, WHO WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN ARRANGING FOR MORE SPACIOUS QUARTERS FOR THE BHC.

- HE DESCRIBED THE NEW APARTMENTS AS HAVING BEEN TOTALLY VANDALIZED - NO WINDOWS, MISSING TOILETS AND FIXTURES, NO ELECTRICITY ETC. NEVERTHELESS, THE "BROTHERS" WERE GOING AHEAD WITH THEIR OWN RENOVATIONS DESPITE THE UNCERTAINTY OF THEIR SITUATION IN THE EYES OF THE GOI. HE DID NOT WISH TO SHOW THE APARTMENTS UNTIL THEY WERE PRESENTABLE.

- HE DESCRIBED AS NONSENSE THE FREQUENT PUBLIC REFERENCE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF MASS SUICIDE, AND FIRMLY DENIED THAT HE AND THE BHC WOULD EVER ENGAGE IN SUCH AN ACTION. HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT THE BHC WOULD NEVER WILLINGLY ALLOW ITSELF TO BE DEPORTED, AND THAT ANY ATTEMPTS TO DO SO WOULD BE MET WITH VIOLENT RESISTANCE. HE SAID THAT EVEN IF THEY MANAGED TO DEPORT TWO-THIRDS, ONE-THIRD WOULD DIE FIGHTING. THE QUESTION OF WHAT HE WOULD DO IF DEPORTATIONS WERE TO OCCUR ON A PIECEMEAL OR AD HOC BASIS WAS NOT EXPLORED DURING THIS VISIT.

- HE DENIED THAT THERE WAS ANY BASIS FOR A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE (SEE TEL AVIV 20341) STATING THAT THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS SECRETARY-GENERAL MARK KLEIN HAD SAID THERE WERE 10,000 POTENTIAL BLACK HEBREWS IN THE U.S. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THERE CERTAINLY ARE AT LEAST THAT MANY BLACKS IN THE U.S. - AND THEIR NUMBER IS INCREASING ALL THE TIME - WHO ARE TAKING AN INTEREST IN THE PLIGHT OF THE BHC.

IN GENERAL, THE ANSWERS PROVIDED REAFFIRMATION OF INFORMATION GLEANED DURING PREVIOUS VISITS. UNFORTUNATELY, IT WAS NOT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY SC DATE 9/14
PORTIONS DENIED/AS INDICATED

3 June
Ambassador
Rins Before Monday's
Meeting

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INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01
ACTION NEA-11

TEL AV 20126 02 OF 02 142342Z

1819

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SS-15 MED-05 L-03 OCS-06 PPT-01
CA-01 SY-05 HHS-04 ED-04 /056 W
-----003272 142342Z /70

R 121730Z NOV 80
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3247

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TEL AVIV 20525

FOR NEA/IAI CA/OCS/EMR, ALSO FOR OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR

POSSIBLE TO OBSERVE CHILDREN OR COMMUNITY LIFE DURING
THIS VISIT.

4. (LOU) THE EMBASSY INTENDS TO MAKE ANOTHER VISIT THIS
MONTH WITH THE PROMISE OF BEING ALLOWED TO VIEW THE NEW
QUARTERS. AT THAT TIME WE PLAN TO BRING ONE OR TWO ADDI-
TIONAL EMBASSY WIVES ALONG TO MEET WITH THE WOMEN OF THE
BHC. IN FACT, THE BHC INTENDS TO TURN THE OCCASION INTO
A KIND OF "OPEN HOUSE."

5. (LOU) CARTER ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A 21-
YEAR OLD GIRL AND HER 14-YEAR OLD NEPHEW WHO HAD LEFT THE
COMMUNITY RECENTLY AND WHO ARE AWAITING REPATRIATION
THROUGH THE EMBASSY. AT THE EMBASSY'S REQUEST, CARTER
HAD WILLINGLY RETURNED THEIR PASSPORTS, AND NOW HE SAID,
AS IF SLIGHTLY HURT, THAT IF THEY HAD WISHED TO LEAVE
THE BHC, THEY NEED ONLY HAVE ASKED FOR THEIR PASSPORTS.
THE RETURN OF THE PASSPORTS BY THE BHC IS A "FIRST," AND
THE EMBASSY INTENDS TO TRY TO HOLD CARTER TO HIS WORD IN
FUTURE CASES.



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